

VZCZCXRO8662
OO RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHTC #0108/01 0511053
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 201053Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3793
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

Saturday, 20 February 2010, 10:53
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 000108
SENSITIVE
NOFORN
SIPDIS
EO 12958 DECL: 02/18/2020
TAGS PREL, NATO, AF, NL
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS: CABINET FALLS OVER AFGHANISTAN
ELECTIONEERING

REF: A. THE HAGUE 097 B. THE HAGUE 15 C. 09 THE HAGUE 758 D. 09 THE HAGUE 663 E. 09 THE HAGUE 271

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Edwin R. Nolan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C/NF) SUMMARY: Following a marathon 15 hour Cabinet meeting, the Dutch Cabinet fell around 02:30 a.m., February 20 due to fundamental disagreements over Afghanistan.
2. (C) AFGHANISTAN THE LATEST IN A STRING OF IRRITANTS FOR DUTCH CABINET: Frustration among government ministers has been building for the past several weeks over the government's handling of the situation in Afghanistan.
3. (C) POSTURING OVER AFGHANISTAN BROUGHT DOWN GOVERNMENT: During the past several weeks, Bos, motivated by perceptions of a weak defense of the Netherlands, has been posturing over the government's handling of the situation in Afghanistan.
4. (U) LIKELY OUTCOME: LONG PERIOD OF CARETAKER GOVERNMENT WITH LIMITED AUTHORITY: With the Cabinet's announcement, the PM will submit his resignation to the Queen, and a caretaker government will be formed.
5. (C/NF) IMMEDIATE CONCERN FOR U.S. INTERESTS -- DUTCH FUTURE STATUS IN URUZGAN: FM Verhagen's Chief of Staff Marcel de Vink told us earlier this morning that the Dutch government's fall had become almost certain. Our efforts now turn to support the Dutch people and the U.S. interests in the region.